



August 16, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of the Gwynns Falls Trail Council (GFTC) to urge your support for the City of Baltimore's TIGER II grant application for the Westport Waterfront Transit-Oriented Development (Westport Waterfront TOD). The Westport Waterfront TOD will provide multi-modal transportation infrastructure, including light rail, highway, pedestrian, bike and road, to support the development of 13,000 new jobs and 2,000 housing units and the rehabilitation of a 50 acre brownfield in a severely distressed area of Baltimore.

The GFTC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development, management and promotion of the 15-mile Gwynns Falls Trail (GFT), one of the longest shared use trails in the nation. The Council works in partnership with Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to facilitate the further development of the GFT, promote its use and enjoyment, and ensure its proper maintenance.

The GFTC is thrilled to see that Baltimore's TIGER II application includes funding to convert what is now a narrow and unsafe on-road section of the GFT in Westport into a two-mile dedicated off-road loop. This loop will provide a direct connection between the Trail, the Westport Light Rail station, the neighborhood and the TOD. The Trail is not only an important recreational amenity but a critical commuter greenway connecting more than 30 inner-city neighborhoods to the larger bike network in the Baltimore region.

We applaud the USDOT for the TIGER II program and its emphasis on supporting multi-modal infrastructure such as the Trail. The Westport Waterfront TOD project is very worthy of your investment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William F. Eberhart, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

William F. Eberhart, Jr.
Chair

cc: Mr. Jamie Kendrick, Baltimore City Department of Transportation